

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Previously amended) A control unit sized to permit it to be hand-held during the performance of trading operations, the control unit being in electrical communication with one or more computers for use in performing electronic trading operations, the one or more computers communicating with at least one visual display for displaying to an operator of the control unit trading-related information, comprising:

trading control buttons having differing shapes, sizes and/or textures to provide the operator with tactile feedback sufficient to allow the operator to distinguish between the trading control buttons substantially without visually focusing on the buttons during trading operations;

wherein the operator can perform trading operations without the need for sliding the control unit over a surface and permitting the operator to maintain substantially constant visual contact with the at least one visual display, substantially without the need for visually focusing on the control unit during the performance of trading operations; and

customizable software enabling the controller to interface with one or more trading applications.

2. (Original) The control unit of Claim 1, wherein the control unit includes a cursor control mechanism for allowing the operator to position a cursor within the at least one visual display.

3. (Canceled) ~~The control unit of Claim 1, wherein the trading control~~

~~buttons have different shapes, sizes or textures to provide the operator with tactile feedback sufficient to allow the operator to distinguish between the trading control buttons without visually focusing on the buttons.~~

4. (Original) The control unit of Claim 1, wherein the trading control buttons emit different audible signals to allow the operator to distinguish between the trading control buttons without visually contacting on the buttons.

5. (Original) The control unit of Claim 1, wherein the control unit includes a visual display.

6. (Original) The control unit of Claim 5, wherein the visual display comprises an LED screen showing trading-related information.

7. (Previously amended) The control unit of Claim 1, further comprising two or more visual displays associated with the one or more computers, wherein the control unit includes a transfer mechanism allowing the operator to shift cursor control between the two or more visual displays.

8. (Original) The control unit of Claim 1, wherein the control unit includes a button allowing the vertical scrolling of information on a visual display.

9. (Original) The control unit of Claim 1, wherein the control unit includes a button which, when depressed, changes the function of other buttons located on the control unit.

10. (Original) The control unit of Claim 1, wherein the control unit employs software configured to mimic mouse/keyboard input.

11. (Previously amended) The control unit of Claim 10, wherein a virtual

plate of glass is placed over the user interface to customize the trading application.

12. (Canceled) ~~The control unit of Claim 1, wherein the control unit is sized to permit it to be hand-held during the performance of trading operations.~~

13. (Previously amended) A method for using a control unit sized to permit it to be hand-held during the performance of trading operations, the control unit being in electrical communication with one or more computers for performing electronic trading operations, the one or more computers communicating with at least one visual display for displaying to an operator of the control unit trading-related information, comprising the steps of:

performing trading operations using trading control buttons located on the hand-held control unit, the trading control buttons having differing shapes, sizes and/or textures to provide the operator with tactile feedback sufficient to allow the operator to distinguish between the trading control buttons substantially without visually focusing on the buttons during trading operations;

during the performance of trading operations, positioning a cursor within the at least one visual display using a cursor control-mechanism located on the control unit without the need for sliding the control unit over a surface and while permitting the operator to maintain substantially constant visual contact with the at least one visual display, substantially without the need for visually focusing on the control unit during the performance of trading operations.

14. (Canceled) ~~The method of Claim 13, wherein trading operations are performed while maintaining the control unit within a hand-held position.~~